1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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the seeds are small, shiny and scarlet, with black eyes, and are used as beads in Bastar and many parts of the Central Provinces. For poisoning tiger they 'salt' the flesh of a kill with the poisonous leaves, bark and roots of the shrub *dual bito* (Halbi *bag mohra*; *Alstonia scrifolia*) mixed with quicklime.

C. *Domestication of Animals*

Pork is a major item in the dietary of Hill and Bison-horn Marias. At the end of marches in the Abujhmar hills I always paid for a pig for the carriers from the preceding camp to roast and eat before dispersing to their villages; and it is sound to provide the Marias or Murias called out for any State work with pork at the beginning and end of the work. The best fattened hog[1] is very cheap and goes a long way. The housing and feeding of pigs have already been described[2]; cared for in this way, even the domestic India pig is not necessarily the foul worm-ridden pest that he becomes in the low caste quarters of the towns and villages of British India, and in fact in Abujhmar villages his quarters are often cleaner than the houses.

Pigs

Nearly all young boars are gelded, but a few are left entire for sacrifices in honour of the clan-god and the Village Mother to whom neither Hill nor Bison-horn Maria would offer a hog. The Hill Maria lays the boar on its back, ties its front legs to a post, and stretches out its back legs, while another draws out its penis (*dim*) and crushes its testicles (*morrkeng*) with stones. They say that gelding improves the flavour of pork, and the only boars ever eaten are those sacrificed. A hog is always part of the Hill Maria bride-price. Hill Marias call a hog *hadiali padi* or *huna padi*, and Bison-horn *hadiali padi*; boars they respectively call *charkal padi* and *hural padi*.

Cooked pig's lard is kept in many Hill Maria houses as a salve for sore eyes and cuts.

They keep numbers of poultry similar in breed and appearance to the red jungle fowl. The Hill Maria's hen-coops have been described on page 104. Cocks and hens are taken to the field houses, and roost there below the sleeping platforms. *Korr-guda*, tunnel-shaped nests on bamboo posts about two feet high, are kept in every Hill Maria house, and by many Bison-horn Marias. Jungle cock visit the *penda* plots and fight the domestic cocks in the early morning; the Hill Marias say that if a jungle cock crosses a domestic hen the eggs are not fertile.

Poultry

[1] 'Hog' is used in its technical sense, of a gelded boar
[2] See pp. 103 and 120.

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has been formally demanded, shame prevents her looking at her betrothed. The parents this time do not take the village elders with them, but bring a rupee's worth of *mahua*, as before. The purpose of the visit is to ask the girl's parents if they are now ready to give the girl in marriage, or want to wait another six months or year; if they are poor, they may not have had time to collect enough to meet their share of the cost of the wedding, and this is the only possible justification for further postponement of the wedding. Normally the girl's parents say they are ready, and ask the youth's parents to come for the girl in ten days' time. This visit occurs generally at the end of Phagur or early in Chaita month, because, although marriages may take place at any time of year, they almost always take place in Chaita, when there is no field work and there is plenty of grain in hand from the freshly garnered harvest. Before this visit the amount of the bride-price or *paring*, settled at the previous *talq-da'ina*, should be ready, and the girl's parents signify their readiness to give the girl by asking the youth's parents to bring the bride-price in ten days' time. The amount of the bride-price varies with the means of the youth's family. It consists of a rupee's worth of new cloth for the bride's mother, a gelded pig, one *pailî* (four pounds) of salt, one *pailî* of ground *ambari* (roselle) flowers, one or two pounds of red chillies, two or three pieces of turmeric, and, according to the means of the bridegroom's family, from one to four *duti* baskets each containing ten *pailî* (forty pounds) of husked *kutki*, from eight annas' to three rupees' worth of *mahua* spirit, and from Rs. 5 to Rs. 40 in cash. It is the cash portion of the bride-price that is avoided or reduced by cross-cousin marriage or such arrangements as the marriage of a brother and sister of one family to the sister and brother of another; other items are unaffected; the bride's mother must always get her cloth, and the pig and grain are eaten at the wedding.

On the day appointed for bringing the bride-price the bridegroom stays at home, but his father and mother, taking the bride-price, proceed to the bride's village, accompanied by all their fellow-villagers, and preceded by three or four drummers. The villagers who go with them, men, women, boys and girls, do not expect to be fed entirely at the expense of the bridegroom's parents, and therefore take their own food and drink for the first meal on arrival; it is felt that, to be entertained at the expense of the parents would not be helping them, but adding to the financial burden of the wedding.

On arrival, the bridegroom's parents make the bride-price over to the bride's parents, and all the visiting party then cook their food and eat it apart from the bride's parents and co-villagers. After

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585 this supper both parties assemble in front of the bride's house, the men and youths in dancing-dress, and there is dancing and singing till dawn, all men, women, youths and girls present being free to take part, whether married or single, old or young. Soon after dawn the pig, grain and liquor brought by the bridegroom's parents as part of the bride-price are divided into a portion for the bride's village and a portion for the visiting village, cooked and partaken of by all present; any deficiency is made up by the girl's parents, this being their only expense; they do not even decorate their house or put up booths for the guests.

This wedding breakfast over, the bride is brought out by her parents and made over to the bridegroom's parents. She is not washed or given special clothes, though if funds permit she sometimes gets a new loin-cloth. She is expected to weep profusely in token of reluctance to leave her father's home. The bridegroom's parents take her on foot through the forest to their village, arriving always in the evening. The bridegroom stays in his house; to go out to meet the bride would be immodest. She is escorted to his house, thrust inside, and the marriage is thus completed without further ceremony. There is no present from the bridegroom to the bride, not even a ring as among the Bison-horn Marias. Supper that night is cooked for the couple by the bridegroom's mother.

582 177 Pre-puberty marriage never occurs among the Hill Marias, who look upon it as an utterly abhorrent custom of the Kosor or Hindus. Unfortunately a few Bison-horn Marias are beginning to ape their Hindu neighbours in this as in other matters; but even now probably only three in a hundred Bison-horn marriages are child marriages.

Child marriage

583 It is very common for the bridegroom to serve his future father-in-law for his bride instead of paying the bride-price. If at the second *talq-da'ina* his parents have to admit to the girl's parents that they cannot afford the bride-price, it is arranged for the bridegroom to go as *lamana'i* or suitor-servant to the girl's parents for a term of years that varies from three years to seven or eight, though when the term exceeds three years the girl usually becomes the *lamana'i's* wife for the last two years. For the first part of his service the *lamana'i* is not supposed to have intercourse with the girl, but, provided that the girl agrees (and she is seldom reluctant), he generally does so after a time. It is, however, considered a disgrace to her parents if in consequence she becomes pregnant, and they are fined a pig, which is eaten by all their and the *lamana'i's* clansmen, after which the girl is regarded as the *lamana'i's* wife. Often at the end of the agreed period of service the father-in-law is unwilling

Serving for a wife

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to let his daughter go, or to lose the assistance of his future son-in-law; but in that case the marriage is at once celebrated, the *lamana'i* leaving his father-in-law's house where he has stayed for the period of his service for a house built for him in the father-in-law's village, and his parents and their party, after the wedding dance and breakfast, take the girl and leave her there with him instead of in their own village; but thereafter no *lamana'i* ever stays more than two years in his father-in-law's village. Provided that the girl has not become pregnant, there is always a regular *marmi* wedding at the end of the agreed term, the bride's parents meeting the expenses; if she has become pregnant, after the penal feast of pork already mentioned she becomes the *lamana'i's* wife merely by passing into his keeping by *ottur*.

This account of marriage by service is based entirely on investigations among the Hill Marias; but it is equally common among the Bison-horn Marias, and their practice is much the same except that, of course, the regular marriage at the end of the term of service is the ordinary Bison-horn *pendul* wedding, while, owing to the fact that in all villages there are many houses and fields belonging to clans other than the original clan that founded the village, the *lamana'i* often settles permanently in his father-in-law's village, and breaks up new land for himself with the consent of the *pala* or headman.

Bison-horn Maria betrothal ('tulpana') and marriage ('pendul')

Among Bison-horn Marias a father wishing to ask another man for his daughter's hand for his son goes to him with a few relatives and takes a *paili* of rice, and a large earthen pot (*handi*) and a small earthen pot (*dudi*) of *mahua* spirit. As already stated in the section on omens, the party will turn back if it meets a bad omen on the way, and postpone the journey for a fortnight. On their arrival at the girl's house her father calls his relatives and the village elders; when all have assembled, the father of the prospective bridegroom formally asks the girl's father for the girl as his son's wife. Sometimes the visiting father comes rather to assert his right to the girl in *gudapal* marriage, and before either his son or the girl has attained puberty, than in the expectation of arranging the wedding in the near future, especially if he has heard rumours of the girl being given to someone else; in such cases the girl's father almost always refuses to give his girl at least till both the boy and the girl are mature, and the boy's father formally declares that he will never renounce his *gudapal* rights. It has already been said that the Bison-horn Marias assert these rights more strongly than the Hill Marias, among whom the *gudapal* tie is rather a convenient and economical arrangement than a binding

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celebrate his son's marriage on a certain date, and asks him to deliver the girl to him on the appointed day; in reply he agrees to do so, but calls on the youth's father to settle the bride-price then and there, and to deliver it to him when he comes for the girl. Bison-horn Marias do not use the word *paring* for the bride-price, but either the Chhattisgarhi Hindi word *barna*, the Halbi word *jora*, or, more commonly, the ordinary Hindi term for expenses, *kharcha*. They then discuss terms. If it is a *gudapal* union, the girl's father expects only to get as much *landa*, *mahua* spirit, grain and cloth as his family had to pay in the previous generation when he married her mother. A Bison-horn marriage is extremely expensive to the bridegroom's parents because they are expected to keep open house, and guests pour in uninvited from all villages to which the throb of the marriage drums reverberates; and therefore the actual bride-price is kept as low as possible. In fact, in many *parganas* they assert that no cash passes from the bridegroom's parents to the bride's. The practice varies; a single rupee passed in the weddings that I saw, though in certain disputes that came to my notice after a wife had eloped with another man the first husband claimed from the new husband the refund of cash alleged to have formed part of the bride-price. In general, however, cash is not the important element in the Bison-horn that it is in the Hill Maria bride-price. Usually the bride-price consists of from five to ten very large pots of *landa*, one *pali* of husked rice or *kuthi* for every pot of *landa*, two large and one small pots of *mahua* spirit, a large gelded pig ready slaughtered, a cock, and about four yards of Mahra cloth for the bride's mother, the cloth being sometimes called in Hindi *ma'i-lugra*. Another consideration is the cost of the dinner that the girl's father has to give to his relatives before the girl is taken away, known as *suttam-jawa*, and of her going-away presents; in the discussion about the bringing of the bride-price on the wedding-day suggested by the bridegroom's father, the girl's father sometimes alleges that he is too poor to collect the necessary food and presents by the suggested date and that he must therefore have another year before handing over his daughter, unless the bridegroom's father will help him with a loan in cash or in kind. The loan is readily made if the latter is well-to-do. These matters being settled, the bride's father formally promises to hand the girl over on the appointed day, and the promise is ratified by the usual libation from the small pot of *mahua* to the Departed of the girl's family, and the consumption of the *landa* and the *mahua* spirit by all present, the bridegroom's father and his party returning to their village after having been entertained to dinner by the bride's father.

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gyrated in all directions, at one moment appearing inextricably mixed together, only to disentangle miraculously at the next and weave themselves into fresh spirals and circles, singing abuse at each other. All the while the group of standing girls went on swaying and singing round the door; the leader caused great laughter by improvising a song warning all girls to be on their guard that night, for the Diwan, the Tahsildar and the Circle Inspector were watching them, and who knew what might happen after dark?

Before we arrived the bridegroom's party had presented the bride-price, which consisted of one slaughtered pig, a live pig, five very large pots of *landa*, five *pailí* of husked rice, four yards of Mahra cloth for the bride's mother, and one rupee. While the chains of girls were dancing around the bride and bridegroom, her mother's sister came out and displayed the bride's going-away presents, a *masni* or grass sleeping-mat, a small basket containing about a *pailí* of husked rice, a large pot of *landa*, and a young bull calf newly weaned.

Some men wearing their bison-horn dancing head-dresses and beating their long drums now started to dance near the gyrating chains of girls, and there was a further accompaniment to the singing of bamboo flutes. The two chains of girls suddenly opened out, leaving the bridegroom and bride together, and the girl's father and the bridegroom's elder brother were with them, holding their hands. The old father, Kunjami Harma, held up his hand for silence, and started a long speech, asking the bridegroom's elder brother, 'Have you come willingly for this flower? Will you wear it and cherish it? It is fresh and tender, and will not bear rough handling. Know you how witless women are? If she be a poor housekeeper, pardon her. If she cook badly, pardon her. If she speak to other men, do not take it amiss, but pardon her.' There were other similar injunctions, and to all the bridegroom's brother answered yes. Then Kunjami Harma took his daughter, who took the bridegroom's right hand, and placed on his little finger a ring that she had pulled off the little finger of her own right hand; the bridegroom then took a ring off his own left little finger and placed it on hers; cloths were held over their heads while this exchange was in progress. The bridegroom then took off another ring, which the girl's elder sister received in her outstretched cloth, while she said, 'From now onwards you must neither touch me nor utter my name till I am dead. If you do, all will laugh at you, and your brethren will fine you.' I was told that if she dies before him, he will take a ring off her little finger and wear it on the middle finger of his right hand. He also gave a ring to the bride's younger sister, for he is free to touch her and to talk of her by name. Then his

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588 cases there is no bride-price, though the deserted husband can claim from the new husband the bride-price which he paid when he married the woman, a *gudapal* cousin can claim Rs. 5 compensation if an unmarried girl goes to some other man, and a younger brother of the dead husband can claim Rs. 5 compensation if a widow goes to a new husband. Sometimes when parents or parties to a marriage are very poor and cannot afford the expense of a regular wedding they merely start to live together in this way, either performing the marriage ceremony later when they have had time to collect the means required, or else distributing tiny cakes to their clan-fellows instead. The term *aghmirtur* or *armirtur* is sometimes applied to the elopement of an unmarried girl or a wife with another man.

583 *Poyse'ottur* or marriage by capture still occurs, though getting rarer every year. We have seen how, when a girl remains unmarried her parents will arrange for her cross-cousin to carry her off; and in the Bison-horn *pendul* regular marriage described above there is an element of marriage by capture in the way in which the bride feigns resistance when the bridegroom's party begins to escort her to his village and when she is finally parted from the girls of her own village with a show of force by the bridegroom's younger brother and his friends. In fact, the Hill and Bison-horn Maria custom of the bride being taken off from her native village to the bridegroom's village and of the wedding taking place there may be a survival of a former general custom of marriage by capture. When the girl is unmarried and is carried off by her cross-cousin at her parents' request, they usually explain matters to her as she is being carried off and advise her to make the best of it. I found only one Bison-horn Maria who admitted having really captured his wife in the good old way once so prevalent in the Killepal, Dantewara, Pharaspal, Kuakonda and Aranpur *parganas*, probably in the whole of the Bison-horn country. He was reticent about the whole affair, though apparently the girl had been willing to marry him, but her parents had objected. According to old records the practice was for the villagers of the girl's village to beat the invading party of youths until it had crossed the village boundary with the girl; Russell and Hiralal (III, p. 79) state that the women only used to beat the invaders in this way, the invaders making no effort to retaliate, and the marriage being completed by the gift of a cloth to the girl on arrival in the captor's village and a *landa* carousal by the invading party.

587 Widow marriage is common among all Marias. In the hills, widows usually go to their husband's younger brothers without any

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

III. Six Kinds of Marriage

583 As in other parts of aboriginal India, the Muria recognize several different types of marriage, which for convenience I will give in tabular form.

585 (i) *Ostasāna marmi* (Halbi, *sopni bihao*). This is the traditional Gond marriage; the parents, after anointing the girl with haldi, send her to the bridegroom's house where the Lagir is performed.

(ii) *Talk dayna* (Halbi, *chal bihao*). This is the Hinduized modification of the Gond marriage and is performed partly in the bride's and partly in the bridegroom's house. The Lagir is held outside the bride's house. It is known as Chat-marmi in Betul and is only performed when the contracting parties have quarrelled.[1]

(iii) *Arwitāna* (Halbi, *udaliya*[2]). This is the marriage of a chelik and motiari who elope to a friend's house and have the rites there without the approval of their parents. The full ceremonies may be performed, but the bridegroom has to pay for them himself.

(iv) *Haiwark wāt* (Halbi, *paisa mundi* or *paitu*). Here a girl runs away from her parents' house and forces marriage on a boy of her choice. She arrives, sits down and refuses to go away.

[587] (v) *Tika tasāna* (Halbi, *haldi-pāni bihao*). This is the simple and inexpensive ritual performed either for a widow or widower who remarries, for the marriage of divorced persons or for an adulterous marriage.

(vi) *Yer dosāna marmi* (Halbi, *bhul bihao*). This is the hurried marriage when a motiari is found to be pregnant. If the boy to whom she is engaged is willing to marry her in spite of this and is willing to accept the child as his own, it is called a *bhul bihao*. If the marriage is with the boy who caused the pregnancy it is simply a *yer dosāna* or 'pouring-water marriage'.[3]

585 I will describe in very considerable detail the first two types of marriage. The others may be disposed of more expeditiously.

The *Arwitāna* marriage is often performed with the full rites, though naturally somewhat modified by the absence of the parents, and the fact that the bride and bridegroom are attended by chelik and motiari of another ghotul.

The *Haiwark wāt* marriage is celebrated when a girl leaves her home and forces herself upon her lover. When the boy asks her what she wants, she says she has come for *paisa mundi*. If the boy is willing, and sometimes even if he is not very enthusiastic about it, the marriage is performed as soon as possible. That very evening the chelik and motiari assemble and build a simple booth with only five pillars. Bride and bridegroom sit in this and the Gaita places rapidly-made crowns on their heads, and puts haldi and oil on their bodies. The village people do tika and the chelik and motiari take bride and bridegroom seven times round the booth and someone pours water and haldi over them.

587 The *Tika tasāna* marriage is simple and inexpensive. It often has to be, for in the case of adultery, elopement or a marriage after divorce, the new

[1] Trench, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 80.
[2] Russell says this means 'Love in the fields'—Russell and Hiralal, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 466.
[3] To these forms of marriage many parallels may be found in other Indian tribes as well as in traditional Hinduism.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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TWO TYPES OF GHOTUL

of a chelik's absence from the ghotul to seduce his motiari. These things happen, but they are condemned.

The chelik themselves consider that this type of ghotul has several great advantages. The first, characteristically, is the very practical one that if a girl becomes pregnant 'they know the thief'. Elsewhere it is naturally often difficult to fix the responsibility of fatherhood. Again, the chelik say that a great deal of trouble is saved. 'We know what to do; there is no jealousy or dispute; everything is settled, and there is no more to be said.' I think it is true that there is less strain and anxiety in these ghotul; and there is room for the development of deep intimacy and romantic attachment. In the pre-nuptial period, however, it may be argued that these things are not altogether desirable.

They certainly lead to greater conflict with the parents over marriage. Many chelik and motiari look forward with misery to separation from the partner who has shared with them the happy days of youth, and occasionally—but only occasionally—ghotul partners elope together rather than face a separation. Statistics here are striking. Out of the 2000 marriages examined, 1884 were celebrated according to the wishes of the parents and the great majority of cases were of the cross-cousin type. Of the 116 irregular marriages, 77 were those of chelik who married their 'ghotul-wives'. Only 39 irregular marriages were reported from the other type of ghotul. In view of the smaller number of men from the *jodidār* ghotul, these figures indicate a proportion of about 1 in every 9 of chelik in this type of ghotul who had conflict with their parents, and only 1 in about 32 from the other type of ghotul.

Of those who married their 'ghotul-wives', 9 out of 77 divorced them later, giving a proportion of 11·6 per cent against a proportion of 2·9 per cent of divorces for the whole 2000 marriages. It is interesting that the proportion of divorces among Lamhada—the other type of chelik who live in close contact with their future wives before marriage—is almost exactly the same, 11·5 per cent. And although 77 and 113 cases respectively are not sufficient for us to draw far-reaching conclusions, it is undoubtedly striking that there should be so high an incidence of divorce among these and only among these two classes of people.

Yet even though a passionate ghotul attachment is not the best preparation for a life-long union, at the time separation seems tragic indeed. A girl especially, whose chelik marries someone else, is a pathetic figure. 'Her life has left her'—so they put it in Munjmeta—'she lies alone on her mat and pines for him; she has no heart to take another lover.' Often she sleeps with a girl friend who is herself in the arms of a boy, but she lies with her back to them, turning away from all that happiness. In Ulera they said that when a girl's lover leaves her, she cannot sing for many days. When the Mukhwan of Banjora died, the Mukhwanin's face was 'destroyed by sorrow'.

Boys are often, but not always, more philosophical. 'Yes, for a month you feel wretched', said a chelik in Markabera. 'Then you forget all about it. One may be able to meet her again, but that is difficult and dangerous. But at least you can always get another girl in the ghotul.' Yet at Bopna the Silledar was called a 'widower', so miserable was he after his 'wife's' marriage last year. At Markabera, Dasru took to drink after his ghotul wife was married and Gurti, who was deeply attached to the beautiful and vivacious Malko, looked very lonely and miserable when I saw him nearly a year after her marriage to a boy in another village.

It is remarkable, however, how few actual tragedies there have been from this cause. In the last ten years, only one case of suicide has been registered

THE PROBLEM OF GHOTUL INFERTILITY

Sometimes, indeed, the chelik actually try to make a girl pregnant. In Kanhargaon, two very popular motiari were betrothed to boys at Nayanar. The Kanhargaon chelik did all they could to make them pregnant so that they could force them into marriage and keep them in their own village. But they were unsuccessful, and in the end one of the girls was seduced by her own betrothed at a marriage, became pregnant and was hastily married to him. It is not uncommon, though I have no statistics on the point, for engaged couples whose parents unduly delay their marriage to force the issue either by eloping together or by trying to achieve a pregnancy.

But on the whole, the admirable ghotul rule that engaged couples should have nothing to do with one another before marriage is carefully observed. Out of 113 Lamhada boys serving for their wives and in close proximity for several years to the girls they were going to marry, only 5 made them pregnant.

Pre-nuptial pregnancy does not seem to injure the couple's relationships in marriage, provided a youth marries the girl himself. Of the 26 chelik who married the motiari they made pregnant, not one made a failure of his domestic life. At the time of my inquiries every one of them was living with his original partner and very happy with her. But those who had infertile sexual connexion with their wives before marriage showed a comparatively high divorce rate. Of the 316 who admitted to this, 14 had unsuccessful marriages. Of these 77 were the regular ghotul-wives of my informants and 68 of them were still living together when I inquired.

In only three cases during the last twenty years has a pregnancy been taken so seriously as to lead to tragedy. Two of these were the suicides which I have already described in Chapter XV. But here it was not so much the pregnancy itself as the fact that the pregnancy was the result of a connexion between chelik and motiari of the same clan that mattered. The third tragedy appears to have been due largely to a chelik's fear of the disgrace and expense, especially as it was his second experience of the kind.

At the beginning of April 1942, Birjhu, a chelik of the Aturbera ghotul, discovered with dismay that his motiari, Mori, was pregnant. Only a year before he had made another girl pregnant in the ghotul, had refused to marry her and had forced his parents to pay compensation. They did so, but they made many threats as to what they would do if it occurred again. Mori, who seems to have been in love with the boy, said that he must marry her, but Birjhu refused and said that if she told anybody that it was through him that she had conceived, he would kill her. After a little while, however, the poor girl told her brother's wife about it. When Birjhu heard she had done so, he planned to carry out his threat. On the night of the 14th of April, he told Mori he would do what she wanted and they had better elope together and get married in another village. Late at night they crept stealthily out of the ghotul and made their way through the forest. But suddenly, before they had gone very far, Birjhu caught hold of the girl and strangled her. Then he dragged her body below a tree and tied a rope round the neck to make it look as though the girl had committed suicide.

The following day a report was made at the Narayanpur police station that Mori had committed suicide. When Birjhu heard that the matter had gone to the police, he was frightened but possibly even more he was overwhelmed with sorrow and misery at what he had done. He disappeared, and two days later hanged himself from a tree in the jungle.

But this is the only incident of the kind that has yet been recorded.

Such is the general picture, familiar to students of pre-marital freedom everywhere. How are we to explain the fact that through all the years of

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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regard it as a mere preparation; the ghotul is the school of marriage, a training-ground of the domestic virtues. 'When a girl learns to keep the ghotul clean, she will keep her husband's house clean; the boy who is taught to bring wood and work hard will do the same in his own house.'

Still more important, the ghotul exercises its members in the sexual arts and virtues. In other 'higher' societies, how many lives have been ruined on the marriage night![1] But when a newly-married Muria husband and wife approach each other, they are already sexually educated, graduates in the technique of love, instinctively able to avoid the dangers into which untried partners so easily fall. The agony of defloration is divorced from marriage; the hymen casts no shadow across its consummation. The husband is not likely to be repelled by frigidity or shocked by dispareunia—an experience which might later make him impotent. Not a little of the serenity and stability of Muria marriage is due to the fact that when husband and wife cross its threshold they are both prepared.

II. The Appeal of the Childhood Friend

But though the ghotul is a school of marriage, it is not a place for experimental marriages. According to Muria tradition a chelik should never marry his ghotul partner, and once a boy and girl are betrothed they are separated in the ghotul by the strictest of taboos.

For a long time I was under the impression that marriages had to be arranged between families living in different villages. But when I examined the matter statistically I was surprised to find that out of the 2000 marriages scrutinized, there were

Marriages between members of the same ghotul	.. ..	765
Marriages between members of different ghotul	.. ..	1235

Of the 765, between members of the same ghotul, there were

Lamhada (marriage by service)[2]	.. ..	113
Irregular marriages (chelik marrying their ghotul-wives)	..	77
Betrothed in the ordinary way	.. ..	575

These figures are sufficient to show that there is no official objection to boys and girls who are to marry each other later growing up in the same ghotul. This is significant when we remember that both boy and girl will be regularly cohabiting with others during the betrothal period. But that this does not interfere with their ultimate happiness is shown by the figures for divorce. These are very low, only 59, or under 3 per cent, for the whole tribe, but they rise startlingly in two special cases.

[1] 'The course of a marriage is determined by the wedding night.' With these words Dr E. S. Chesser opens her discussion of the Honeymoon in A. Forbath, *Love, Marriage, Jealousy* (London, 1938), p. 169. The Muria would think that very odd.

[2] Many of the Lamhada boys probably came from different villages, but after beginning their period of service would have had to join the same ghotul as their future wives.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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THE GHOTUL AND MARRIAGE

IV. MARRIAGE BY SERVICE

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One of the first to describe the custom of marriage by service in India was the Abbé Dubois who wrote that 'the expenses of a wedding are so considerable that in all castes one often sees young men, who are without the necessary means, using the same expedient to procure a wife that Jacob employed with Laban'.[1] 'Marriage by service must be distinguished from other customs which take a son-in-law to live in his wife's house. In all parts of India a youth may go to live with his parents-in-law either because the girl's family is well-to-do but without sons, or because it is poor and needs an extra man in the house, or because the son-in-law is poor and cannot pay the bride-price. The Coorgis allow a man who has no sons to give his daughter in marriage on the understanding that his son-in-law will remain with her in the house, and that any issue will belong to his family. Similar customs are reported from the Holeya of Bombay and the Kunnavan and Madiga of Madras, as well as from Assam, Kashmir and the Punjab. It is said that if a Santal or Uraon boy marries a girl without brothers and stays in his father-in-law's house and works for him till he dies, he will inherit the property.'[2]

Westermarck has distinguished between marriage by service as a regular form of marriage, which is preferred by the people because it gives an opportunity to test a youth's fitness, and marriage by service as a substitute for marriage by purchase.[3] Schmidt and Koppers have shown that the institution, 'functionally and culture-historically belonging to a matriarchal culture, has been transformed under patriarchal influence into the institution of paying the bride-price'.[4]

Marriage by service in Bastar means that a youth whose family cannot afford the bride-price comes to live in his father-in-law's house and works for him until he has earned his wife. He then marries her and either takes her to a house of his own or stays on with the parents-in-law. In the Madras Presidency the number of years' service required was seven; in the central India of today, it is generally not more than five and often only three. In the Punjab and the United Provinces it is normally three years. Here the practice is found among most Hindu castes, even Brahmins and Rajputs, and sometimes among Mussalmans. Youths who serve in this way are often despised, and a proverb is quoted from the United Provinces: *Kuta pāle, so kuta; sās ghar jamai aur bahin ghar bhai*—He who tames a dog is a dog; other dogs are those who live in a mother-in-law's house or where a sister is married.[5]

The chelik who goes to serve for his bride is called Lam or Lamhada in Gondi, Gharjiya in Halbi and Lamsena in Hindi.[6] In the Central Provinces

[1] J. A. Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 3rd edition (Oxford, 1928), p. 213. Nowadays many youths go instead to the tea gardens of Assam in order to earn sufficient to pay a bride-price; it would be an interesting subject for inquiry, to examine how far the Tea Districts Labour Association's recruitment has modified the institution of the 'serving marriage'.

[2] *See Census of India, 1931*, United Provinces Report, p. 311.

[3] Westermarck, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 366ff.

[4] O. R. Ehrenfels, *Mother-right in India*, p. 147, quoting Schmidt and Koppers, *Volker und Kulturen* (Regensburg, 1924), pp. 270ff.

[5] *Census of India, 1931*, United Provinces Report, p. 311.

[6] For the institution in India generally see Ward, op. cit., p. 138 (for the Mandla District); *Census of India, 1931*, Vol. I, Part IIIB, p. 53 (for the Bhil); Russell and Hiralal, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 210 (Basor), Vol. III, p. 394 (Kawar), Vol. III, p. 550 (Korku), Vol. IV, p. 133 (Mahar), Vol. IV, p. 152 (Majhwar), Vol. IV, p. 166 (Mali). See also Ehrenfels, op. cit., p. 197; S. Hivale, *The Pardhans of the Upper Narbada Valley*, pp. 205ff.; *The Baiga*, pp. 287f.

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

X 883 583 he is sometimes known as the Gahania[1]—the boy who is in pawn. Elsewhere in India he is called Ghar-jamai, Ghardi-jawae, Ghar-damand and Khana-damand—these expressions mean 'house-son-in-law'.

The Lamhada is betrothed to his girl in the ordinary way, and then comes to live in her father's house, where he is treated as one of the family. If he has been living hitherto in a different village, he has to leave the ghotul there and join the ghotul of which his future bride is a motiari. He will get a ghotul-wife or a temporary partner as the case may be and he will live with her at the same time that he serves for his betrothed. We thus have the interesting situation that if a Lamhada boy comes from another village to a place where there is a *joddidr* ghotul, he gets two new girls—one his betrothed with whom he should have nothing to do, and the other his ghotul-wife with whom he will regularly cohabit.

The strongly equalitarian character of the Muria saves the institution of serving-marriage from certain obvious disadvantages. A boy is not looked down upon because he has no money. The capital that he brings to his new home is the strength of his arms, his industry and his enterprise. It is true that the hardest tasks are often given him, but these are to test his capacity and willingness to work rather than any token that he is regarded as inferior. His status in the ghotul is as good as any, and he is just as likely to become Sirdar or Kotwar as the son of the house where he is serving.

[522] But the Lamhada is a licensed subject for jesting. His close proximity to his future wife—in the same house, a definitely more 'risky' connexion than the closely disciplined relationship in the ghotul; his relations with his mother-in-law and other forbidden persons begun even before marriage; the heavy tasks and tests that are laid upon him; these are subjects for endless comment and amusement.

X 883 583 539 In Dugabangal, the boys and girls sing a *Lâw dâyna pâta*, a song about a boy going as a Lamhada.

Say Lamka Lamka, say son-in-law.
Hard is the work of the Lamka boy.
What is the plough made of?
The plough is made of the kosom tree.
What is the yoke made of?
The yoke is made of the siuna tree.
What is the pole made of?
The pole is made of the tinsa tree.
The bullocks are uncle and nephew;
The field is the field of the frogs;
The rice is black as the eyes of a queen.

In a Chitkul song of the Amoli ghotul, a girl is represented as chiding her father for not getting her married.

I am growing up like the beans in the garden,
Yet no one comes to marry me.
I am seven years mature, my father,
I am nearly old as you.
Yet if a boy comes to be Lamhada,
You show him the axe that weighs twelve *gasa*;
You show him the basket of two hundred bamboos;
And he goes to find another girl.

[1] In Betul Gondi he is called Lamjanal and the girl he is betrothed to is Lamjana-watar.—Trench, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 104.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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THE GHOTUL AND MARRIAGE

X983 An old woman at Masora spoke with great indignation about the way her
583 mother treated the boy who served for her. 'She gave him the heaviest work, and she delayed our marriage as long as she could, for she wanted to get as much work out of him as possible.'

An interesting expression was used at Chandabera. 'A Lamhada is the *koryāri* (daughter-in-law), because he is brought to the house of his wife. Just as the mother-in-law usually abuses her son's wife, so now does the mother-in-law abuse her daughter's husband. He is the daughter-in-law and must do her work.'

X983 An adaptation of a familiar folk-tale motif describes the trials of a Lamhada
583 and his final victory.

539 A father-in-law says to the Lamhada boy, 'Boy, go and sow sarson seed'. The boy goes and in the evening, the father says, 'Boy, go and bring it back, seed for seed, in the same measure'. The Lamhada goes weeping, for he loves the girl, and begins to pick up the seeds one by one. A pair of partridges come by and say, 'Boy, don't weep: we will gather it all for you'. By evening every grain is back in the measure.

Then says the father, 'Boy, bring me five measures of ashes from hemp-waste'. The Lamhada collects a pile of waste and burns it, but the ashes go to nothing. At last he goes to his father-in-law and says, 'Without a knotless bamboo, I can do nothing'. The father searches on every hillside and at last returns. 'Boy, I am defeated'. The Lamhada says, 'But if I bring it, will you give me your daughter at once'? The father promises, and the Lamhada brings back a reed. 'Here is bamboo without a knot: give me your daughter.'

X983 What of the relations between the Lamhada and the girl with whom he is
584 brought into such intimate contact? In the ghotul the same rules are supposed to apply as govern the conduct of other betrothed couples. The girl must strictly avoid her Lamhada; she must not salute him, nor comb his hair, nor massage him. She must not sleep with him, or sit on his mat. In his presence she will sleep regularly with other boys; he too will have his own partners. Yet neither may reproach the other, though they will be working together all day in the same house.

But although betrothed couples usually seem to observe these rules of avoidance fairly strictly, they are sometimes broken by the Lamhada. Several factors contribute to this. The boy and girl are brought into far more constant and intimate contact in kitchen, field and forest than ordinary engaged couples. A girl cannot help feeling that the Lamhada boy is already more or less married to her when she sees his relations with her parents, watches him already observing the special rules of jesting and avoidance with her other relatives; perhaps not a little sympathy is roused in her heart at the sight of the hard life he leads. Above all, if they do come together, and if she should become pregnant, nothing is easier than to perform their marriage—the boy concluding his term of service afterwards. When the Malik of Lohatur who was a Lamhada made his betrothed pregnant, they were not even fined, for the parents said, 'If it hadn't happened today, it would have happened tomorrow'.

Many cases of such 'irregularities' have been recorded. Dhani, the old Muria woman of Masora, had her affections strongly stirred by her mother's treatment of her Lamhada and she used to sleep with him in the ghotul. At Tarbaili, a girl was passionately devoted to her Lamhada; they used to slip out together at night into the forest—for at least they must preserve the conventions.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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343 substantial and carefully tended buildings. Fowls, set in
[23] funnel-shaped bamboo stands, share the house with the human beings.

II

241 The Maria's main source of livelihood is agriculture. The ancient and traditional method is axe-cultivation, whereby the people make clearings in the forest with their axes, allow the felled wood to dry, fire it shortly before the rains and then sow the seed in the ashes. Sometimes this is done in the very place where the trees are cut. Sometimes brush-wood is carried to a regular field and spread upon its surface. The Maria, living as they do in settled and often level country, have also many permanent fields which are embanked and
[312] irrigated by artificial tanks. The Maria are very proud of these tanks, and they are a frequent cause of dispute which sometimes leads to murder. A great part of the Maria's life is necessarily spent in these fields and clearings, and little field-huts and platforms are erected in which whole families camp for weeks at a time watching the crops at night and cooking and doing their work by day. Everybody helps in the work. Beside the family there may be farm-hands, some
[464 of a special kind such as the Lamhada, who serves for his
582] wife instead of paying the bride-price, and the Kabari who is a bond-servant working to repay a loan.[1]

Besides agriculture, the Maria eagerly and successfully exploit the produce of the great forests in which they live.
[222] There is nothing edible that they will not eat, fruits, roots,
262 tubers, leaves—they have a profound knowledge of the possibilities of natural produce. They are equally omnivorous in their attitude to meat. In the villages they keep pigs, goats and fowls, and they are fond of pigeons. They still (though they often deny it to outsiders) eat beef on all important and
224 ceremonial occasions. Rats, squirrels and small birds are caught by the children and roasted and eaten with delight.

[1] The Kabari system, which is similar to what is called Bhagela in Hyderabad, Kamiauti in Bihar, and Gothi in Orissa and Madras, is open to grave abuses—men working a whole life-time to settle a debt which is not settled even by death, but descends to the sons—and is now controlled by the State.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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girl's first menstruation is marked by special rites of purification. There is little conscious education of the young who grow up in natural freedom and learn by imitation. Marriage is generally adult, but is arranged by the parents and the cross-cousin marriage is common. Betrothal ceremonies are simple. The boy's father goes with gifts and a traditional formula is used—'We have heard there is a flower growing in your garden. We have come to pluck it and put it in our hair'. If a boy's family cannot afford the bride-price required, they may send him to serve as a Lamhada in the house of his future wife. His period of service is for three or five years, and the marriage is often celebrated before it is complete. Marriage by capture, which was probably the traditional method, has not yet died out, and occasionally there is a case of the reverse tradition when a girl comes as a Paitu and forces herself upon a man who is bound to marry her. Widow-remarriage is permitted and indeed enjoined, the husband's younger brother having the first claim on the person and property of the widow. Divorce is rare but is available to either husband or wife. The wife usually achieves it by eloping with another man and the husband in most cases accepts a *fait accompli*.

The actual marriage ceremony is also simple. There is no annointing with turmeric or oil, no perambulation of the sacred pole. Customs vary from place to place, but the traditional marriage has probably only three elements—a celebration which includes feasting, drinking and dancing, the pouring of water from the roof of a house or shed onto the bridal pair and the ceremonial consummation of the marriage at which bride and bridegroom are forcibly shut up in a room together.

VI

Funeral ceremonies are more elaborate, and since this book is concerned with death, we will consider them in greater detail.

Maria thinking about the destiny and state of the soul after death is as confused as that of more sophisticated people. At least three contradictory views of the subject are held at the same time. I think that the oldest and characteristically

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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586 by the fact that Chewa had himself turned the girl out and that between her first and second marriages she had spent two years in her father's house. The matter was thus a difficult one, and was still further complicated by Pandu being a blacksmith who probably did not anticipate fair treatment from the tribal panchayat.

X 674 604 There was a very curious and tragic murder when young sixteen-year old Marvi Hunga killed Hirma, a boy three years younger than himself. These two boys were related as uncle and nephew; Hunga's mother was married to the uncle of Hirma's father. This relationship is a privileged one. Just as a grandson may joke with his grandmother, so an uncle may abuse his nephew and even threaten to sleep with his mother, and neither uncle nor nephew is supposed to take any notice of it.

But on this occasion when Hunga met his young nephew Hirma in a field and asked him where he was going, the younger boy abused his uncle's mother and wife saying that he would keep them both as his wives; this annoyed Hunga and he drew his bow and shot the boy with an arrow. The incident apparently had nothing whatever behind it. The boys were not drunk and were on good terms. Hunga seems to have been suddenly, but quite improperly, excited by the abuse given by his nephew, and in a few moments two lives were ruined.

VIII

LAMHADA

583 Among the Maria, as in many other parts of tribal India, there is an arrangement whereby youths from poor families who cannot afford the price of a bride can serve for her for three, five or seven years. In Bastar such a youth is known as Lamhada, Lamanai, Lamsena or Gharjamai. The relations between the Lamhada and his future parents-in-law is not always a happy one, and it is complicated by the intimate proximity in which he has to live with the girl to whom he is not yet married. Sometimes, however, especially if the Lamhada happens to make the girl pregnant, the marriage is celebrated before the end of his term of service.

X 674 578 583 Only two cases of murder have arisen out of a Lamhada

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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situation. The first reproduced incidents that are constantly happening all over India. Kalmumi Masa was living as a Lamhada in the house of his mother-in-law, a widow named Hungi. He was already married to the girl, Kohale, though he was still fulfilling his contract of service. The two women, as often happens when they deal with a youth of this kind (for the Lamhada as a poor boy and often without relatives is generally despised), were careless in their treatment of him, and did not bother to cook his meals properly. A few days before the tragedy they went out for a funeral ceremony, and Hungi only sent Kohale home very late in the evening to see to her husband's food. When he found that nothing had been prepared, he was very angry and for fear of being beaten the girl ran away and spent the night in a fig tree.

The next day a panchayat was called to consider the relations of Masa and his wife. Masa objected to his affairs being discussed in public, and probably suspected that his mother-in-law had too much influence with the panchayat. He had to be forcibly brought to the meeting which decided that the women were not cooking properly for the boy, and ordered them to behave better in future. But Masa was also reproved. He was slapped by the Gaita (priest) and ordered not to beat his wife who was six months with child. Masa was very angry at this, and removed his things from Hungi's house. He no longer took his meals there, but only went there to sleep. He did not go away immediately to another village, because he wanted to take his wife with him, get his share of the rice crop and make arrangements for removing his cattle.

Hungi, of course, did not want to lose Masa's services. As a widow she was entirely dependent on him for the cultivation of her land. She persuaded her daughter to refuse to go away with him, and did everything she could to stop him removing his rice. On the eve of the tragedy the boy filled three baskets with the grain, and put them ready for removal the following morning. Hungi said that she would on no account let him take the rice, and spent the night sleeping in front of it, on guard with her two children. Early in the morning Masa went to get his property. The old woman tried to prevent him; Masa flew

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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into a rage, struck her heavily and killed her. Kohale tried to intervene, and he so injured her also that she died a fortnight later.

Marvi Risami was the Maria blacksmith of Bastanar. Towards the end of 1934 he brought a youth, Markami Wango, to serve as a Lamhada for his young daughter Paike. The boy worked in the house for about a year and a half, and Risami intended to celebrate the marriage in 1936.

All went well at first. But there was living in the house a youth of about Wango's age, Marvi Kuma, a son of Risami's elder brother, whose parents had died when he was a child and who had been, for all practical purposes, adopted by the Bastanar household. This boy was thus, according to the classificatory system of relationship, Paike's brother and, of course, belonged to the same clan. Any relationship between the two would be regarded by tribal custom as extremely serious, as a form of incest. In spite of this, however, Kuma and Paike were greatly attracted by each other and Paike soon found that she had little time to give to her betrothed Wango. One day at the end of the hot weather, Wango and Paike went with Kuma and another youth, Kosa, to the hill near Lakhapal to get ore for smelting in the smithy. When they arrived there, Kosa went to the village on some business of his own and Wango accompanied him to get a drink of water. It is possible that he deliberately left Kuma and Paike together with the idea of spying on them and catching them *in flagranti*. He returned quietly and claims that he caught them actually in the act of intercourse. He threw a stone at his rival but missed him, and then chased him with a knife. Kuma ran away, and when Kosa rejoined the party, he found Wango quarrelling with Paike and throwing stones at her. Wango declared that he would kill all the people of the Marvi clan, and would either be hanged or run away to the Tea Gardens.

About a month later, the whole family with a number of other relatives and neighbours went to Handa Khodra to fetch grass for the thatching of their houses at the beginning of the rains (it was 2 June 1936), and when they got home late in the afternoon they found Risami with a pot of rice-beer and everyone had a little. Apparently no one was actually intoxicated, but they were at least revived after

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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their long day's work. That night at supper Wango accused Kuma of allowing Paike to flirt with him and of distracting her affections from himself. The boy seems to have been

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Necklace in Muria style, part of a dancing outfit

genuinely upset at his betrothed's lack of interest in him and her frigid attitude. He threatened to shoot her with an arrow. Kuma told his uncle Risami about this, and the old man got angry and declared that it was disgraceful of Wango to accuse a girl betrothed to him of so serious a crime as incest, and hit the boy twice. Wango caught hold of his future father-in-law, but the others separated them. So Wango walked out of the house. Risami followed to bring him back, for he had no desire to lose such a useful person

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as a Lamhada. But Wango threw a stone at him, hitting him on the back of the head and making it bleed. Risami then went to the village headman and reported the matter, and they arranged with the Kotwar to hold an enquiry the next morning.

While Risami and the others were at the headman's house, Wango returned home to fetch his dancing kit. This was not the usual bison-horn outfit, but a collection of small and big bells, waist-band and necklaces. It looks as though he had decided to leave the house and abandon his duties as Lamhada out of disgust with the family that seemed allied against him. While he was removing the dancing things, Paike came out of the house and stopped him, saying that they belonged to her and had been given her by her parents. Paike's mother, who was eight months pregnant and was lying in the house, also seems to have shouted to the boy abusively to return the things. Wango, already in a towering rage, drew his bow and shot the girl just below the left breast. She lived till the following morning but then died of an acute generalized peritonitis.

In Court Wango declared that on the night of the quarrel he had again caught Kuma having intercourse with Paike, and that this had so enraged him that he had gone to remove his possessions from the house. But when Paike and her mother tried to stop him he shot the girl. This part of the story was doubted, since the other members of the party declared that Kuma had gone with Risami to make a report to the headman. But obviously everybody was concerned to hush up the matter of Paike's intimacy with her cousin-brother, and it is possible that Wango, who appears to have had something of the voyeur's temperament, may have again been hanging about to catch them together and may have again succeeded.

It is interesting that the immediate cause of this murder, like the last, was the attempt by the women of the house to prevent a Lamhada from going away and removing his property. It is not easy to say whether Wango found the loss of his property, or the sight of his betrothed in the arms of another man the more provocative. I think probably it was the struggle over the dancing outfit that really provoked the murder.

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674 With these cases we may compare the tragic destiny of
583 Dome, a young unmarried Dhurwa girl aged about seventeen. A youth called Joga had been living as her Lamhada for the past five years, and their marriage had been arranged to take place at the next harvest. Dome did not care for Joga, but like any other Maria girl she was prepared to follow her parents' wishes in regard to her marriage and become his wife.

[513] One night the girl found herself alone in her house. Joga was not supposed to sleep indoors, but outside in the courtyard. The girl went to bed and shut the door of her room. Late that night Joga went to her and asked her to have sexual intercourse with him. She refused, saying that, if she did, the gods would be angry with her and her cattle would die, and Joga went away. Fearing that the boy might ravish her, she got her axe and kept it by her side. Presently she fell sleep and again Joga came into the house and caught hold of her. She started up and struck him a violent blow with her axe, making a deep wound from which he died in a few minutes.

The Court held that Dome had acted according to her right of self-defence when she was unprotected in the house at dead of night. It is not known why Dome rejected her [836] future husband, for it is not really a very common habit among girls for whom Lamhada are serving. It is possible that she was in her menstrual period, a thought that is suggested by her saying that the gods would be angry and the cattle die if she had intercourse. On the other hand, it may merely be that she disliked the boy and did not wish to have anything to do with him until she had to after marriage.

Another Lamhada, who is now serving a sentence of life imprisonment in Jagdalpur, is Khuja, a Muria boy from Esalnar. He is a cheerful and rather stupid youth who, when he described his crime to me, laughed heartily at what he considered the amusing bits. Khuja was living with his father-in-law and though the girl was very young had already been married to her. One day a Ghasia beggar woman came to the house and said to him, 'Come along boy'. He asked her what she wanted him for, and she replied, 'For your wife's head'. A fortnight later she came again and complain-

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ed to the father-in-law that Khuja had abused her, repeating the words that he had used. This annoyed Khuja so much that he followed her home, and when they came to the boundary of the village, threw her down and beat her to death. Khuja's anger may have been due to the fact that he was sensitive about being a Lamhada, particularly as he had married a very young wife.

In two cases conflict between a Lamhada and his father-in-law led to suicide. Ghasia went to dance with the other boys and girls of the village when he should have been working at home. Akali Modi had served three years for his wife, to whom he was married four months before his death. As is often the case he was continuing to serve his father-in-law until the payment of the bride-price was completed. On the night before his suicide, two cows broke their tethering cords and damaged the crops. On such occasions it is almost routine to blame the Lamhada, and the father-in-law doubtless bewailed his mistake in giving his daughter to such a fool and made offensive remarks about the boy's mother. Modi, who is said to have been a sensitive, quick-tempered youth waited till the rest of the family went into the fields and then hanged himself from a tree outside the village.